THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) to (d) There is no reliable information to suggest that there is an increase in hormone-related diseases. A programme for control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders, a nutrition-related disorder caused by the imbalance of hormones has been taken up which, inter alia, comprises surveying the population, propagating the use of iodated salt and building awareness in the community. A scheme for creating awareness about the primay prevention of diabetes is also receiving attention. Facilities for diagnosis and treatment of hormone-related disorders have also been built up in selected hospitals in the Government and private sector.

[English]

Indo-Bangladesh Talks

*307. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to refer to the reply given to unstarred Question No. 2281 on March 10, 1997 regarding Indians in Bangladesh and state :

(a) the main points discussed in the third meeting of Indo-Bangladesh Joint Working Group held in Delhi during January, 1997 and final outcome of the point discussed;

(b) the number of survey teams working for completion of the demarcation of land boundary till January, 1997 and number of teams increased till date; and

(c) whether the increase in number of survey teams has helped the Government in demarcation of land boundary, if so, to what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) With reference to answer given on March 10, 1997 regarding Indians in Bangladesh, the main points discussed in the 3rd meeting of Indo-Bangladesh Joint Working Group held in Delhi during January, 1997 were security related issues, cross border movements, repatriation of Chakma refugees, review of existing visa regime, Director-General level meetings between Border Security Force and Bangladesh Rifles activating the mechanism of nodal officers, and border demarcation. In regard to border demarcation, both sides recongnised the need for early completion of demarcation of land boundary between the two countries. In this connection, both sides agreed on the need to increase the number of survey teams for early completion of the work. The Indian side also explained that the exchange of enclaves could take place only after the demarcation is complete, and necessary legal and constitutional formalities are completed as per Indian laws.

(b) and (c) There is one survey team each jointly deployed by each country on the Indo-Bangladesh boundary in West Bengal sector, Meghalaya sector, Assam sector and Tripura sector till January, 1997. The number of teams has not been increased since then. However, in the West Bengal sector, where bulk of the boundary demarcation work is going on, the composition of the survey teams jointly deployed for demarcation work from December, 1996 onwards was increased to two surveyors, four Amins and two computers. During the Boundary Conference for the West Bengal sector held in Dhaka from July 18-21, 1997 both sides agreed to further strengthen the survey teams to a strength of two surveyors, seven amins and two computers from each side.

As a result of the strengthening of the survey teams in West Bengal sector during the field season 1996-97, the instrumental work by theodolite traverse was completed along the undemarcated portion of the boundary including those along the periphery of adversely possessed areas. In addition, instrumental observations have been completed for accurate calculation of areas of adverse possessions in South Beruberi, Khudipara and Singpara areas.

Sino-Indian Relationship

*308. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether China has made it clear that they are not going to support and aid the rebel groups from North East India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether China has also decided not to support the self-determination of Kashmir issue;

(d) if so, to what extent India has welcomed this move; and

(e) the fresh initiatives taken by both the Governments to strengthen the ties in the field of trade, investment and other areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA) : (a) to (e) The Chinese Governement have denied that they are extending assistance to separatist movements. China maintains that it has never interferred in the internal affairs of other countries and would never do so.

China has said that the Kashmir question is a legacy of history. China has expressed the hope that India and Pakistan would seek a settlement of this question through patient consultations and peaceful negotiations. It is the consistent position of Government that Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of India and will remain so.